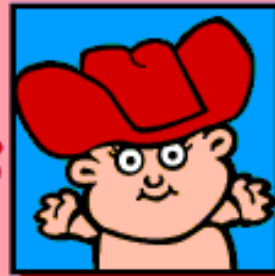




*** Tips For *** **Nursing Mothers**

Engorgement and Sore Nipples



Some moms breastfeed without having a single problem. Others may have engorgement or sore nipples. These problems can be treated so you can keep nursing in comfort. If you feel pain when nursing, give yourself a breastfeeding check-up:



1. Check the way you hold your baby:

- U** Is baby's body up close to your body with his mouth at your nipple?
- U** Are baby's ear, shoulder, and hip in a straight line?
- U** Is baby supported and are you comfortable?

2. Check baby's latch-on:



- U** Does baby keep entire nipple and about one inch of the areola (dark area around nipple) in his mouth while nursing?
- U** Does baby's nose and chin touch your breast?
- U** Are baby's lips flanged (flipped out not tucked in)?
- U** Do baby's ears wiggle and cheeks look full when he nurses?
- U** Can you see baby's tongue cupping your breast when he nurses?

3. Check for milk transfer (milk moving out of the breast and into the baby):

- U** Do you hear baby swallowing?
- U** Do you see milk dripping from your other breast?



4. Check the beginning and ending of the feed:

- U** Do you feed baby when he shows early hunger cues (sucking on fist, sucking his lips, rooting) rather than waiting for a late hunger cue (crying)?
- U** Does baby open his mouth wide to latch on?
- U** Do you break suction before taking baby off your breast?
- U** Do you keep your nipples dry between feedings?

Engorgement

Engorgement is when the skin and nipple area of your breast become stretched and tender. This is caused by natural body changes due to giving birth and because large amounts of milk are not being removed from your breasts.

Most moms feel some discomfort and fullness 3 - 6 days after giving birth. The amount of discomfort differs from mother to mother. The feeling of engorgement can happen later on if you produce milk and don't remove enough of it. Your milk supply will slowly dry up if you don't remove milk on a regular basis.

To treat engorgement and keep your milk supply high, **breastfeed**, hand express or use a

breast pump. Some breast pumps can be painful to use when engorged, so be careful and choose a good pump. It can be difficult to remove milk when your breasts are swollen and tender.

Tips to help with engorgement:

- Place warm compresses (warm, damp cloths) on your breasts before nursing, hand expressing, or using a breast pump.
- Gently massage your breast to help your milk “let down” (milk drains down toward the nipple).
- Hand express a little milk. This will make your areola softer so it is easier for your baby to latch on and nurse. Ask your breastfeeding counselor to teach you how to hand express.
- Place cold packs (cool cloths or an ice pack wrapped in a towel) on your breasts to soothe any aches, pains, and swelling between feedings.

Remember, **BREASTFEEDING** your baby as often (at least every 3 hours) and for as long as your baby wants is the best way to remove milk from your breasts.

Sore Nipples

There are many causes of sore nipples. It’s normal for nipples to be tender the first few days after giving birth.

Common causes for sore, cracked, or bleeding nipples are:

- Baby is not held correctly or has poor latch-on.
- Baby is not placing his tongue over his lower gum when sucking.
- Baby is taken off the breast without first breaking his suction with your finger.
- Baby is not fed until he cries and is very hungry. A tense, hungry baby can have a very strong suck.
- Your nipples are not allowed to completely

dry between feedings or your damp nursing pads are not changed often enough.

- Baby sucks incorrectly or has a short frenulum (string-like piece of skin attaching tongue to the bottom of the mouth).

Correct any possible causes and see if sore nipples improve. See the other side for tips on correcting any possible causes. Breastfeeding is not supposed to hurt, be unpleasant or lead to cracked, bleeding nipples. If you are still having pain and don’t know why, seek help. Breastfeeding is meant to be a wonderful experience for both you and your baby.

There are many people who want to help you comfortably and safely continue to breastfeed. Don’t let engorgement or sore nipples scare you away from breastfeeding, many moms breastfeed without ever feeling any pain. However, should you feel pain, you can get help by calling your local:

WIC Breastfeeding Counselor:

Lactation Consultant:

La Leche League Leader:
